



For Immediate Release

April 13, 2011

**Surry Supports
Child Abuse Prevention Month**

#2-4/11

Research conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has proven that a large percentage of American adults who suffer from challenging health, emotional and social issues today, had negative experiences in childhood that impact their ability to work, create positive relationships and thrive in other areas of life.

With the long-term of positive parenting in mind, the Surry County Office on Youth is commemorating National Child Abuse Prevention Month by reinforcing the message that because children are our future, we must protect their childhoods.

This year, the Surry County Office on Youth is sponsoring and collaborating in several awareness and skill building events throughout April to keep youth safe and to reinforce the need to strengthen families. Some of these events include partnering with L. P. Jackson Middle School's 21st Century Learning Center Program to host the Guiding Good Choices Workshop-April 14 and 27; participating in the Surry Public School's Health Fair; and the Proud Father's Group will host a Boyz to Men Night on April 29. The Youth Council will kick off a "Change for Change Drive" to raise money to send a child, victimized by an unstable home situations and in need of financial assistance, to summer camp which will provide a fun, new learning experience for them. In addition, it may provide a respite break to a grandparent or other relative caregiver.

Sopenia Pierce, Director of the Office on Youth says, "the agency offers many awareness programs throughout the year to help youth but April is the time that the greatest emphasis is placed on promoting safe, stable environments for our children and youth."

Last year in Virginia, 6,234 children were found to be victims in founded cases of abuse and neglect. Communities across the Commonwealth must continue to join forces to battle this public health issue. The Surry County Office on Youth is one of dozens of organizations across the state that have joined with the Virginia Department of Social Services and Prevent Child Abuse Virginia to raise awareness about the need to better serve children and families. The need to spread this message, and encourage parents from all walks of life to seek support and resources that can help them do their best job still continues.

The events we host are being mirrored around the state, along with efforts by state, civic, and private organizations to promote the pinwheel—the national symbol of child abuse prevention—as an emblem of healthy and happy childhoods. Feel free to visit our office located at 203 Church Street near the Surry County Courthouse to see our beautiful pinwheels or to learn of our programs and services.

For more information, visit www.surrycountyva.gov, www.PCAV.org or www.dss.virginia.gov.

###